Application Serial No. 09/777,750

Customer No.: 26021

Reply to Office Action of 09/25/03

PATENT 1888-174 (81841.0045)

PEC 2 9 2003

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of:

Armer J. WILLENBRING

Serial No: 09/777,750

Confirmation No.: 4253

Filed:

February 6, 2001

For:

BULK VESSEL FEEDER

AMENDMENT

Mail Stop NON-FEE AMENDMENT Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Sir:

In response to the Office Action dated September 25, 2003, please amend the above-referenced application as follows:

Amendments to the Claims are reflected in the listing of claims, which begins on page 2 of this paper.

Remarks/Arguments begin on page 12 of this paper.

Art Unit: 1743

Examiner: Brian R. Gordon

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to:

Mail Stop NON-FEE AMENDMENT

Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450

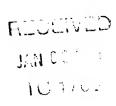
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

December 23, 2003 Date of Deposit

Barry M. Shuman, Reg. No. 50,220

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FORM PTO-1083

1888-174 (81841.0045)

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of:

Armer J. WILLENBRING Serial No: 09/777,750 Filed: February 6, 2001

BULK VESSEL FEEDER For:

Mail Stop NON-FEE AMENDMENT

Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450

Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Transmitted herewith is an Amendment in the above-identified application.

No additional fee is required.

The fee has been calculated as shown below:

Art Unit: 1743 Examiner:

Brian R. Gordon

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Commissioner for Patents

P.O. Box 1450

Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on

December 23, 2003 Date of Deposit

Barry M. Shuman, Reg. No. 50,220

Date

| | (Col. 1) CLAIMS REMAINING AFTER AMENDMENT | | (Col. 2) HIGHEST NUMB PREVIOUSLY PAID | | (Col. 3) PRESENT EXTRA* | LG/S \$ ENTIT | | ADD'L FEE DUE |
|--|---|---|---|-----|-------------------------------|--------------------|-------|------------------|
| TOTAL CLAIMS FEE | 34 | - | 35 | ** | | LG=\$18 SM=\$9 | \$ | \$ |
| INDEPENDENT CLAIMS FEE | 3 | - | 3 | *** | | LG=\$86 SM=\$43 | \$ | \$ |
| FIRST PRESENTATION OF MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIMS LARGE ENTITY FEE = \$290 SMALL ENTITY FEE = \$145 | | | | | | \$ | | |
| | | | | | | | TOTAL | \$ |

If the entry in Col. 1 is less than the entry in Col. 2, write "0" in Col. 3.

If the "Highest Number Previously Paid For" IN THIS SPACE is less than 20, write "20" in this space.

If the "Highest Number Previously Paid For" IN THIS SPACE is less than 3, write "3" in this space. The "Highest Number Previously Paid For" (Total or Independent) is the highest number found from the equivalent box on Col. 1 of a prior amendment or the number of claims originally filed.

| | The state of the s |
|--|--|
| | A check in the amount of \$ to cover the additional claims fee is enclosed. A copy of this sheet is enclosed. |
| | A check in the amount of \$ to cover the extension fee is enclosed. A copy of this sheet is enclosed. |
| | The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiencies of fees associated with this communication or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-1314. A copy of this sheet is enclosed. |
| | enciosed. |
| | Any filing fees under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 for the presentation of extra claims |

 \boxtimes Any patent application processing fees under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17

Respectfully submitted,

HOGAN & HARTSON L.L.P.

Biltmore Tower

Dated: December 23, 2003

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Barry M. Shuman, Ph.D. Registration No. 50,220